D6.10 UNIgreen GREEN STRATEGY

UNIgreen

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AUI	Agricultural University of Iceland (Iceland)
AUP	Agricultural University - Plovdiv (Bulgaria)
BSc	Bachelor of Science
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CO_2	Carbon Dioxide
DigComp	Digital Competence Framework
EC	European Commission
EDIB	equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging
EntreComp	Entrepreneurship Competence Framework
EU	European Union
EUA	European Union Association
GIS	Geographic Information System
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEPL	University-College of the Province of Liège (Belgium)
ICT	Information and Communication System
IP	Intellectual Property
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
JIC	Joint International Centre
JRC	Joint Research Centre
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
KTO	Knowledge Transfer Office
KTU	Knowledge Transfer Unit
LifeComp	European framework for the personal, social and learning to learn key competence
MSc	Master of Science
PUC	Polytechnic University of Coimbra (Portugal)
SGGW	Warsaw University of Life Sciences (Poland)
SupBiotech	SupBiotech Engineering School of Biotechnology (France)
TRL	Technology Readiness Level

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TTO	Technology Transfer Office
TTU	Technology Transfer Unit
UAL	University of Almería (Spain)
UN	United Nations
UNIMORE	University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (Italy)
VET	Vocational Education Centre
WP	Work Package
WPs	Work Packages

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1. About UNIgreen

UNIgreen is an Alliance of eight European Higher Education Institutions that are committed to promoting excellence in education, research and education in the fields of Sustainable Agriculture, Green Biotechnology, and Environmental and Life Sciences, which are pivotal areas of expertise for achieving a resource-efficient, circular, digitised and climate-neutral economy and for boosting the resilience and sustainability of our food system.

The UNIgreen Alliance is working towards becoming The green European University: the leading European University in the fields of Sustainable Agriculture, Green Biotechnology, and Environmental and Life Sciences, where students and the entire Academic Community develop the values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and competences to become agents for the transition towards a climate-neutral and resource-efficient economy, supported by an ecosystem that connects education, research, innovation and society to promote sustainable development.

The transnational and interdisciplinary dimension of UNIgreen will open up a wide range of collaborative opportunities for students, teaching and non-teaching staff, and researchers, who will study, train, teach, do research and work in any of the Alliance countries, as well as will benefit from new mobility formats, shared services across institutions, and from many initiatives to develop their technical and soft skills and exercise their active citizenship.

The UNIgreen Alliance vision is aligned with, and will offer an answer to, several challenges that strongly impact European Higher Education Institutions, notably:

- Specific challenges linked to the European Education Area, the European Higher Education Area, the Bologna Process, and the objective of building resilient and forward-looking education and training systems in the EU.

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- Sustainable development challenges that are global by nature but must be tackled at the local level, which refer to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN General Assembly, 2025), Sustainable Development Goals, and European Green Deal (European Commission, 2023).
- The need for Higher Education Institutions to be contributors to regional development, and, in that sense, their scope of intervention must support national and regional innovation priorities and strategies.

UNIgreen Alliance Members

More information:

unigreen-alliance.eu

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2. Executive Summary

The UNIgreen Alliance has developed this Green Strategy, which functions as a directional tool for its transition toward sustainability, climate neutrality and social accountability. The document presents a specific plan to achieve UNIgreen's future goals by following European Green Deal objectives, UN Sustainable Development Goals and European Education and Research Areas standards.

The 2025 version of the document includes all recommendations from the mid-term evaluation process. The framework connects governance structures to implementation methods and performance assessment systems for better results. The document presents an operational structure that connects UNIgreen's educational and research activities to community service, aligning with the EU and national green transition objectives.

This document operationalises broad goals by specifying concrete actions, funding mechanisms, timelines, and metrics. Key elements include leveraging EU funding (Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, national/regional grants) for green initiatives; engaging industry, NGOs and communities through joint projects and educational programs; addressing each SWOT-identified challenge with targeted solutions; and embedding rigorous impact measurement (UN SDG indicators, Horizon metrics) and EDIB principles (gender equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging) throughout. The result is a clear, actionable plan that aligns UNIgreen's mission with the European Green Deal, the UN SDGs, and Horizon Europe objectives. UNIgreen's vision is to become "the leading European University in Sustainable Agriculture, Green Biotechnology and Environmental Sciences" where students and staff act as "agents for the transition towards a climate-neutral and resource-efficient economy". The strategy refines this vision into concrete strategic goals:

Sustainable Operations and Infrastructure: Green campus management (energy, waste, water) and low-carbon mobility.

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Education and Curriculum Excellence: Integrate sustainability into teaching, curricula, and skills development.

Research, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer: Propel green R&I, technology transfer and start-ups in agriculture and life sciences.

Societal Engagement: Empower local communities, industry and NGOs to co-create solutions and raise public awareness.

Organisational Capacity: Build institutional structures (e.g. Green Transition Unit, Diversity Unit) to drive and monitor the transition.

These goals align with the European Green Deal and UN SDGs (e.g. zero hunger SDG2, climate action SDG13, quality education SDG4, gender equality SDG5, sustainable production SDG12) as described in the Alliance charter.

The impact we anticipate by 2026 is:

- Cut CO_2 emissions through rimmed campus energy consumption, across every partner;
- Strive to infuse sustainability and green expertise into a minimum of 50% of the programmes;
- Putting in place working links that bind research, innovation and regional industry clusters;
- Strong stakeholder participation: A noticeable presence across regional and European arenas;
- Gender equality and inclusiveness are embedded into the core of governance and its implementation.

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3. Introduction

The *European Universities initiative* of the EU Erasmus+ Programme is among the most important initiatives of the European Commission (EC) to maintain and uphold Europe's competitiveness in the fields of Education, Research, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer, and UNIgreen is part of this initiative.

Another crucial initiative of the EC is the European *Green Deal*[1] (see Scheme 1) that sets the overarching policy framework for achieving a climate-neutral continent by 2050.



Source: EC (2019b).

Scheme 1. Structure of the European Green Deal

UNIgreen Alliance links both initiatives, focusing its mission, vision, and objectives on the fulfilment of the Green Deal Initiative objectives. In this regard,

[1] EC, 2019, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions 'The European Green Deal' (COM(2019) 640 final).

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UNIgreen will intensively work on producing healthy, affordable food for everyone, while supporting people and communities to improve soil health, clean water and fresh air based on the concept One Planet, One Health. UNIgreen will achieve this with excellence in teaching, research, and training young students for a carbon-neutral economy, one of the three pillars of the Green Deal, and especially through knowledge transfer, and the procured Community Engagement, a second pillar of the European Green Deal that is at the very core of UNIgreen. UNIgreen will contribute to the economic sectors linked to the European Sustainable Agriculture, Green Biotechnology, Life and Environmental Science and make them more resilient and competitive.

Therefore, the Green Strategy of the UNIgreen Alliance reflects the planet's global challenges, such as global warming and biodiversity losses, that are affecting the environment and food production of the different regions represented in the UNIgreen. In this regard, the UNIgreen outputs will contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), i.e. *SDG 2- Zero Hunger* by means of responsible, sustainable food production for an increasing world population, while preserving biodiversity and *Life on land (SDG 15).* This can be achieved by fulfilling the *SDG 4 - Quality Education*, in all the eight Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of the Alliance, providing in all aspects of our activity *Gender Equality (SDG 5).* UNIgreen aims to contribute to the accomplishment of the Global Goals by maintaining European welfare and standards of life with *Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8)*, since environmental and agricultural sustainability has to incorporate the economic sustainability to maintain European Agriculture profitable and competitive with research and innovation. The UNIgreen Alliance, and associate partners will also contribute to the Responsible Production of food and the *Responsible Consumption of the finite resources of our planet (SDG12),* where decisive actions against Climate change are urgently needed, as the recurrent episodes of drought and desertification remind us *(SDG 13 - Climate Action).*

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UNIgreen has divided its accomplishments into several Working Packages to achieve the overall UNIgreen objectives; one of them being: "To consolidate UNIgreen as a source of knowledge for sustainable development".

WP6 supports and promotes the green transition of the Alliance as a whole and fosters the development of multilateral synergies between Teaching, Research, Business and Industry, in order to enhance the development of skills, generation of knowledge and solutions aligned with the needs of local communities and the labour market.

The UNIgreen Green Strategy is directed to make an environmentally friendly, resource-efficient and climate-neutral European University. It describes the initiatives and plan the transformation actions that are necessary to progressively align UNIgreen with the *European Green Deal* (Scheme 1) and related EU policy (European Education Area 2025, Legislation package „Fit for 55" [2], European Research Area Policy Agenda [3], *European Green Deal:* sustainable use of natural resources [4], Common Agricultural Policy [5], New European Innovation Agenda [6], EU Circular Economy Action Plan [7], EU Biodiversity Strategy [8], Farm-to-Fork Strategy [9]), the EU Net

[2] https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/delivering-european-green-deal_en

[3] https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-11/ec_rtd_era-policy-agenda-2021.pdf

[4] https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_23_3565

[5] https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/cap-overview/cap-glance_en

[6] https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/support-policy-making/shaping-eu-research-and-innovation-policy/new-european-innovation-agenda_en

[7] https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/circular-economy-action-plan_en

[8] EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 https://eurlex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:a3c806a6-9ab3-11ea-9d2d-01aa75ed71a1.0020.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

[9] https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy_en

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Zero Industry Act[10], the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the highest standards for promoting the green transition of Alliance HEIs.

Taking the EU policy priorities as they are demanding a certain approach to doing science and requires universities to work not only with other universities, but to develop common implementation roadmaps with a wider selection of stakeholders (EUA, 2023).

The Alliance Green Strategy 7-year (2024-2030) intervention plan is based on 3 main areas or pillars of initiatives (see also Chapter 4), namely: *Infrastructure & Resources; Administrative Management, Teaching & Learning; and Community Engagement and Awareness.* These pillars are addressed in a holistic and integrated manner, becoming the primary instruments for the UNIgreen green transition towards an environmentally friendly, resource-efficient and climate-neutral European University.

3.1. UNIgreen Mission: Support green transition

The UNIgreen mission is to provide an updated scientific and technological framework to skill, upskill, reskill, and empower existing and future professionals and experts in the field of Sustainable Agriculture, Green Biotechnology and Environmental and Life Sciences to master the green transition and lead the development of the European green economy.

The *vision* of UNIgreen about research, development and innovation is that by 2030:

- UNIgreen is recognised in Europe and internationally as a green university promoting the green transition of the Alliance toward establishing an environmentally friendly, resource-efficient and

[10] https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/industry/sustainability/net-zero-industry-act_en

climate-neutral European University that significantly impacts the achievement of the European Green Deal and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

- UNIgreen successfully promotes cooperation, knowledge transfer, and innovation across Teaching, Research, Business, and Industry by integrating green instruments and strategies.
- UNIgreen successfully integrates instruments to facilitate a smooth transition for students to the labour market through skills alignment and soft skills development.
- UNIgreen successfully demonstrates a model of knowledge and skills transfer generated by the UNIgreen researchers carrying out interdisciplinary scientific and development projects incorporating ecology and climate issues for sustainable development.

3.2. The UNIgreen Green Strategy Objectives

By 2030, the Alliance aims to achieve the ambitious goal of providing different forms of green mobility to its students, which the *Green Strategy* would add by:

- Defining and introducing common administrative, support and management procedures in the Alliance, which integrates green issues relevant for Environment and Society.
- Designing long-term and short-term, in person, blended and virtual, and greener mobility pathways.
- Embedding mandatory green mobility as part of the joint Alliance Academic Offer.
- Creating joint protocols and programmes for incoming and outgoing green mobility beneficiaries.
- Consulting students and staff with special needs to help overcome barriers to green mobility.

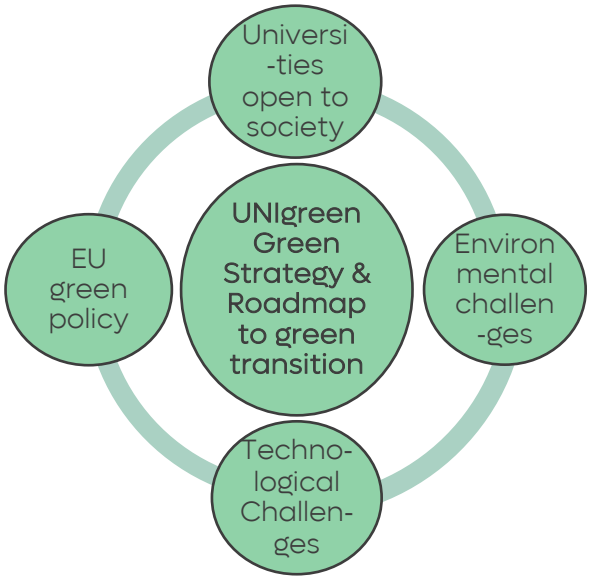
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- Collaborating with students, student associations and student representatives to design the Alliance Buddy Programme to enhance the integration of international students.
- Promoting green mobility and its benefits thanks to the involvement of Student Ambassadors.
- Organising specific green mobility actions and initiatives that are aligned with the specific needs of the different target groups.

The Green Transition has a complex nature and therefore requires a system approach, i.e. to tackle not only the challenges directly linked to climate, environment and society inclusiveness, but also to vulnerabilities such as energy and cost-of-living crisis[11] (EUA, 2023). The HEIs are in a unique place to address these issues (see Scheme 2), because there are open structures bringing together researchers, innovators, educators, public and private sectors, as well as their surrounding communities. Beyond their role as producers and stewards of knowledge, universities also connect existing knowledge to develop new framings of societal challenges. In fact, the long-term future of universities depends on offering programmes of study, research, and innovation that convey the necessary knowledge and skills to address such challenges at the national and transnational level.

[11] https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/eua%20green%20deal%20roadmap.pdf

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Scheme 2. Functional environment impacting the green transition of UNIgreen HEIs

3.3. Green Transition Unit

For the achievement of the Strategy objectives, WP6 undertakes several *activities and programmes* within the *Green Transition Unit,* part of the UNIgreen *Joint International Centre,* which brings together a multidisciplinary team of experts supporting the implementation of the UNIgreen Green Strategy.

The members of the JIC *Green Transition Unit*, among other activities, contributed to:

- Designing and adopting a *Roadmap for the Green Transition* of the UNIgreen as an outline of processes and interventions, which can boost the UNIgreen impact and visibility in pursuing a climate-neutral, environmentally sustainable, and socially equitable Europe.
- The process of development of a *UNIgreen PhD programme in Science, Technology and Agri-food Biotechnology (WP2)* by monitoring the joint PhD programme and suggesting and observing the adoption of green topics, related to the EU Green Deal and the SDGs. This is because the doctoral

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cycle plays an essential role for the UNIgreen since it is the connecting link between Education, Research, Industry and Territory.

- the *UNIgreen International Doctoral School (WP2 and WP3) by suggesting and offering a PhD mobility* for specialisation and advanced knowledge of PhD students and PhD holders, such as seminars, workshops, and open courses that target green topics relevant for ecology and society and use a multidisciplinary approach.
- Suggesting and supporting the development of *UNIgreen joint Master's Degree* in the field of Sustainable Agriculture, Green Biotechnology, and Life Sciences.

3.4. Roadmap for Green Transition

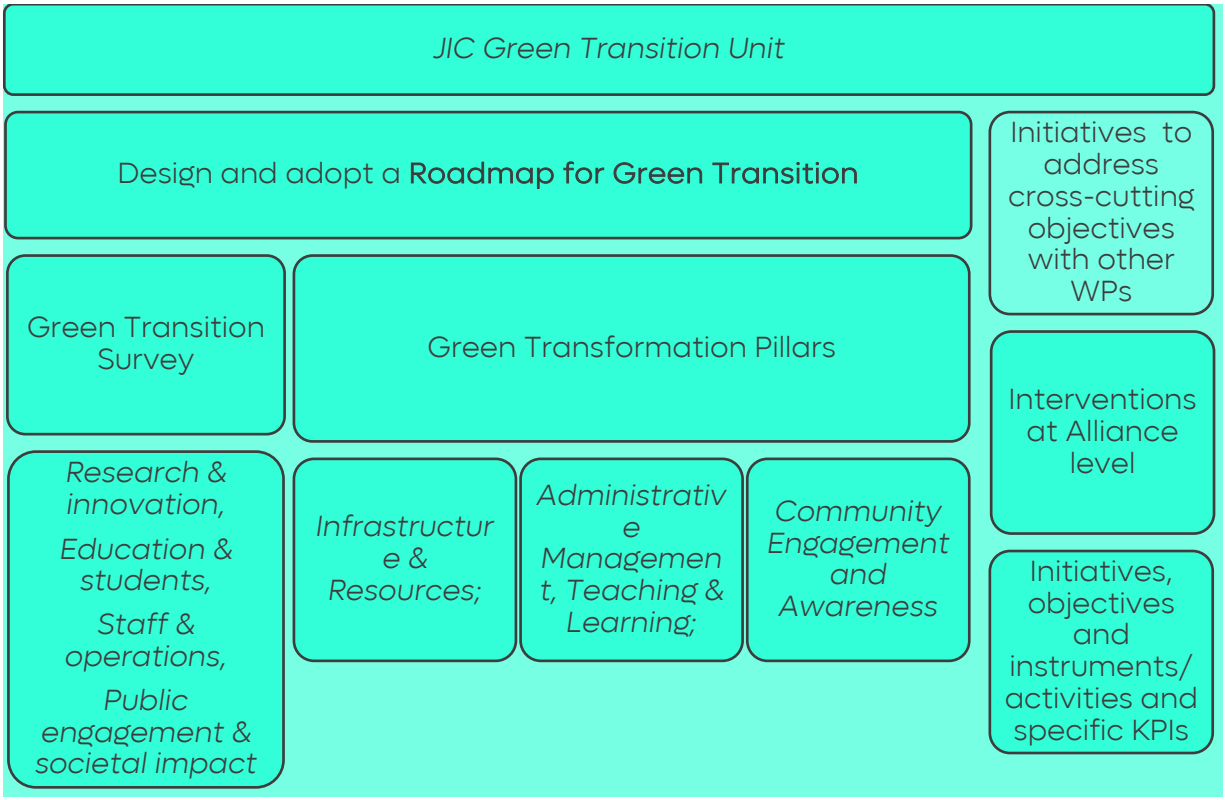
The *Green Transition Unit* (see Scheme 3) performed in 2023 a *Green Transition Survey*, and analyse its results, to screen the UNIgreen landscape in regards to the green policy measures the UNIgreen partner applies or considers applying in relation to Green Transition, including the existing promotion, information, knowledge and innovation transfer, and education, as well as the general direction they should follow to achieve the transition, and which actions are recommended along the way for efficient green transition. It comprised **four areas** of promoting green transition i.e. Research & innovation, Education & students, Staff & operations, Public engagement & societal impact.

An important practical element of the Roadmap provided by WP5 and WP6 is the **UNIgreen Sustainability Handbook and Checklist** for its implementation (see Annex 1). The Checklist should be used for screening against the Checklist criteria prior to each UNIgreen event. In addition, the Roadmap outlines processes and interventions, which boost the UNIgreen HEIs' impact and visibility in pursuing a climate-neutral, environmentally sustainable, and socially equitable Europe.

The Roadmap is framed around the UNIgreen Strategic Plan and is based on UNIgreen partners sharing lessons from strong and weak points and the specificity

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of local paths to green transformation, as well as on shared values, ethics, mutual learning, and collective reflection.

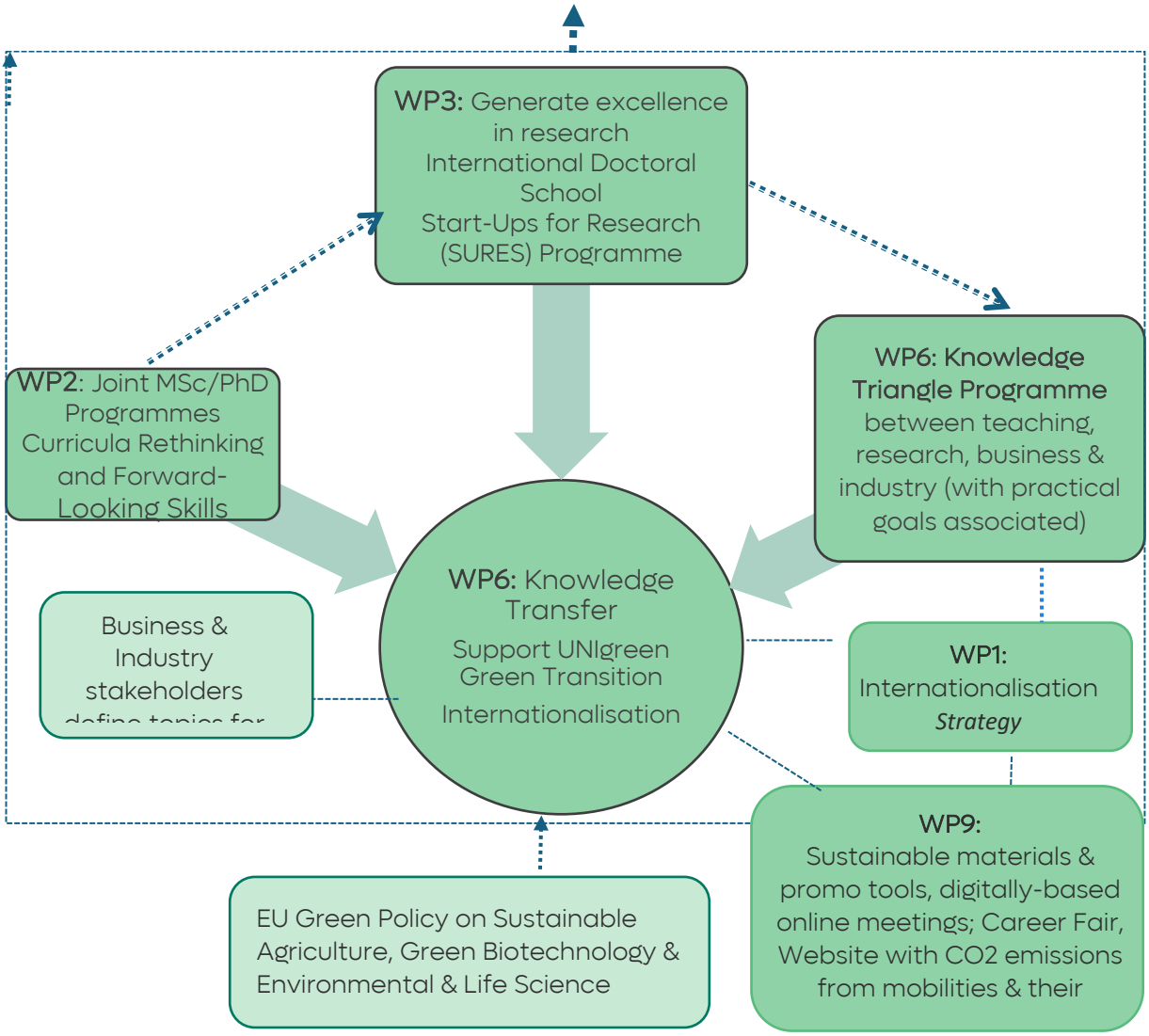


Scheme 3. JIC Green Transition Unit, with its tasks and interventions

The Roadmap determines the pathways towards the green transition, plausible targets, and necessary minimum interventions (*see also Chapter 4 below*), and showcases good practice examples from UNIgreen on possibilities for institutional change in the **four areas of promoting green transition. It** also identifies **specific catalysts for the transition – internal optimisation and external interventions**, which cut across these areas: interdisciplinarity, collaboration, and a commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion, and belonging (EDIB).

Advanced knowledge of PhD students and PhD holders via seminars, workshops & open courses targeting green topics relevant for ecology and society, by using a multidisciplinary

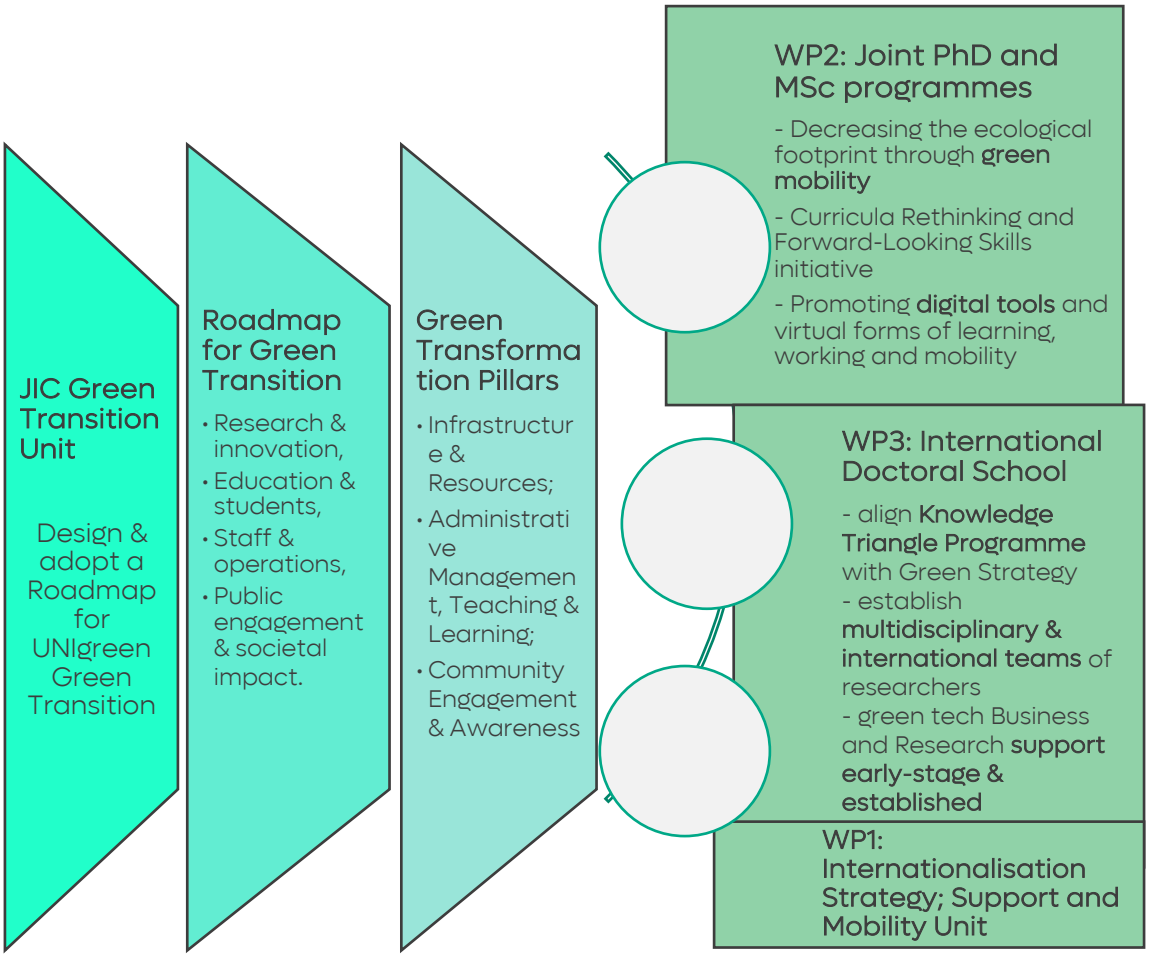
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Scheme 4. Synergies between WP2, WP3 and WP6 to realise the UNIgreen green transition while considering the EU Green policies

The transition entails varying degrees of relevance and urgency for **internal optimisation** (e.g. streamlined management, better leadership, skilled staff) and **external interventions** (e.g. improved funding, framework conditions, policy measures), as well as different levels of involvement and coordination depending on the **target groups** (e.g. academics, university leaders, sectoral associations).

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Scheme 5. Cross-cutting issues and areas of intervention with the other UNIgreen WPs, such as WP1, WP2 and WP3

The Roadmap considers, addresses and integrates cross-cutting issues and areas of intervention with the other UNIgreen WPs such as WP1, WP2 and WP3 (see Schemes 4 and 5). The WP6 initiatives address the **WP2 Task 2.7** Joint PhD Programme and the **WP3 Task 3.7** International Doctoral School (see Schemes 2 and 3). The *UNIgreen Knowledge Triangle Programme* **(WP6)** enhances the collaboration between Education, Research, Business, and Industry stakeholders. The **Business & Industry stakeholders** in each of the partner countries, through WP6 Clusters with Industry, deliver their requests on the topics of the *Joint PhD Programme* (**WP2**). Respectively, the *International Doctoral School* (**WP3**) facilitates the instruments and approaches to

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address the Business challenges in the Joint PhD programme. This **co-creation environment** produces future PhD researchers and business leaders, who will be equipped to test and implement innovative solutions to enhance local and regional development in the field of Sustainable Agriculture, Green Biotechnology and Environmental and Life Sciences. It will also contribute to a smooth transition of students into the labour market by bringing them closer to green tech companies.

The UNIgreen Quality Assurance Strategy and Quality Criteria for Recognition of Degrees reflect the "green" aspects (e.g. subjects taught, programme of study) of the joint BSc, MSc and PhD Programmes. It will allow for a smooth link to the PhD Doctoral school (W3) and then the production of specialists ready to implement the Knowledge Triangle Programme (e.g. links to green Business and Industry).

The Roadmap for Green Transition includes the initiatives the UNIgreen Alliance partners plan to execute as instruments for implementation of the Green Strategy (see below Chapter 4).

4. Initiatives and actions

In this UNIgreen Green Strategy, the initiatives and plan of the transformations necessary to progressively align UNIgreen with the European Green Deal, the 2030 Agenda, Sustainable Development Goals, and the highest standards for promoting the green transition of Alliance HEIs are now described. These are based on three main areas of intervention that, when addressed in a holistic and integrated manner, will pave the way for an environmentally friendly, resource-efficient and climate-neutral European University:

- Infrastructure & Resources;
- Administrative Management, Teaching & Learning;
- Community Engagement and Awareness.

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Strategic Pillars:

Pillar 1: Sustainable Operations

- Reduce campus carbon footprints (energy, water, waste.
- Establish Green Transition Units and Sustainability Offices at each HEI.

Pillar 2: Green Curriculum and Skills

- Mainstream green topics into all levels of education.
- Establish joint BSc, MSc, and PhD programs focused on sustainability or revise and improve the existing Educational Offers (including the UNIgreen joint offers).

Pillar 3: Research and Innovation

- Align research agendas with the EU Green Deal, Horizon Europe, and SDGs.
- Promote Knowledge Triangle collaboration between academia, business, and government.

Pillar 4: Societal Engagement

- Foster inclusive partnerships with communities, NGOs, and regional governments.
- Enhance outreach and impact in rural, underrepresented, and transitioning areas.

Pillar 5: Governance and Inclusivity

- Integrate gender equality and EDIB principles across governance and activities.
- Create Diversity & Inclusion Units at each partner institution.

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Table 1 below reflects the above-mentioned strategic pillars as well as the endeavour to strengthen the synergy between the WPs.

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Table 1. UNIgreen Green Strategy and Plan, and its contribution to UNIGreen Alliance development

Category	Sustainability Areas	Education & Skills	Knowledge Triangle	Talent Management	Skills & Mentoring Labs
Instruments & Tools	**Greening of the HEI campuses – e**.g. via **Ecological & CO_2 Footprint Programme;** methodology for calculations on mobility of UNIgreen students & staff.	**Identify green topics** for green skills development in all levels of education; Double/joint BSc, MSc & PhD on sustainability	**Business cluster** between academia, business & society	A HEI **Talent Management Plan** with specific approaches to attract, develop, retain, & manage HEI talents	Establish **Mentoring Labs** where local entrepreneurs coach students
Outputs	CO_2 emissions compensation from mobility, training tools; Tree Planting Programs executed; published info on website for communities	**Revised 11 joint educational offers** with green subjects in the existing curricula; participation in training and Green (Digital) Competence Passport; green tools for teaching	Network with business leaders & associated partners established – screening Green curricula, providing info & advice	**Talent Management Plan** per UNIgreen partner adopted & published	Associated partners & mentors in the network;
Activities	Make **annual CO2 & Ecological footpint calculations** per partner; Publish the Roadmap for Green Transition, & article on Green Transition Survey; Organise HEIs and Community events.	**Design & adopt 11 educational offers**; Greening the existing curricula (change/add subjects); participate in Seminars, Training-of-Trainers, BIPs, Challenge Labs (campus-wide awareness campaigns ("Green Uni Weeks") & faculty development workshops (or competitions), include live case studies, industry	**Visits to green companies** or guest lectures from business to HEIs green courses; **participate in Education Offers** (e.g. guest-lectures in webinars & seminars, BIPs/Challenge labs, etc.), incl. events for students & entrepreneurs (SURES)	**Career Development** portfolio including professional devt. by workshops, online courses, or conference attendance, leadership programs, etc. **Promote best practice cases** as quality change indicators	**Students develop a "digital portfolio"** tracking their research, entrepreneurial activities, & innovation challenges (projects, papers, training, etc.), receiving a digital "passport" approved by mentors.

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Category	Sustainability Areas	Education & Skills	Knowledge Triangle	Talent Management	Skills & Mentoring Labs
		projects, or entrepreneurial assignment in Microcredential course; Promotion of Education Offers & events			
Measure Impact: KPIs & Quality	**Interviews with students & society** groups; **interactive website map;** trees planted & events associated; CO2/ecological footprint for community; % reduction in greenhouse gas emissions & energy/water usage (per capita) year-on-year, area (ha) of campus reforested or greening, % of waste recycled, number of low-emission vehicles;	**Interviews with students, teachers, or green businesses**; post-event surveys; setup a minimum survey responders per partner. Nr of "green" courses/modules added, & the proportion (%) of graduates in sustainability-related courses (SDG4). Yearly "Green Skills Survey" of alumni will measure employability alignment. Student participation rates in sustainability training (e.g. tens of workshops, mentorship labs).	**Visual reports** (pictures, videos); GDPR compliance; Surveys of stakeholder satisfaction & qualitative case-studies; Nr of green startups created via SURES & cumulative jobs created; Nr of EU-funded green projects (Erasmus+/ Horizon) % total grant volume. Nr of joint university–industry R&D contracts signed /year; Nr of service-learning projects with communities.	**% of HEIs students/ early-stage researchers having portfolio with professional devt.** Executed; % of women in leadership roles in projects, % of international students or participants from underrepresented groups	**Nr of Skills and Mentoring Labs**; **Nr. of mentors in BIPs & seminars; Nr of Associated Partners** & Mentors involved in the Labs; Student self-assessed skill growth; satisfaction level with Skills & Mentoring Labs.

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Category	Sustainability Areas	Education & Skills	Knowledge Triangle	Talent Management	Skills & Mentoring Labs
	Nr of green R&D projects financed by HEIs funds, national or EU Horizon Europe.				

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4.1 Implementation Framework

The JIC Green Transition Unit directs the implementation process through work plan development from pillar conversion while handling WP coordination and funding/IP management, and KPI data validation and internal learning promotion. Each partner operates a Local Green Transition Committee.

4.1.1 Funding and Resources

The Alliance's core funding comes from **Erasmus+** (European Universities Initiative), with up to €14.4 million per alliance over 4 years. These funds support governance, mobility and baseline activities. We will supplement Erasmus+ with: (a) **Horizon Europe** and other EU R&I grants (e.g. EIC, LIFE, Horizon cluster projects) to finance research and innovation projects; and (b) **national/regional schemes** (each country's higher-ed and green transition funds) to match or bridge gaps. Each partner dedicates staff (e.g. Knowledge Transfer Offices, Green Officers) and budget lines to green initiatives. The UNIgreen **Green Transition Unit** (under the joint project office) coordinates funding applications and ensures resource allocation across initiatives.

Resource allocation is transparent and tied to deliverables. For example, at least 20% of each partner's Erasmus+ budget is earmarked for sustainability activities, and Horizon proposals are jointly written by JRC teams (eight thematic units) to maximise synergies. A dedicated legal/finance team streamlines contracts (based on best practices) to fast-track EU and private funding, addressing past bottlenecks in technology transfer.

4.1.2 Timeline and Milestones

The strategy unfolds over the Alliance's current EU funding phase (2023–2027) in annual cycles:

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- **Year 1 (2023)**: Conduct baseline surveys (green skills, campus footprint), establish governance bodies (e.g. Diversity Unit), and apply for key EU calls. Develop detailed action plans (campus greening, curricula updates, community projects).
- **Year 2 (2024)**: Launch flagship projects: roll out waste/energy reduction programs on all campuses; initiate the **UNIgreen Knowledge Triangle Programme** clusters; start SURES incubators (see below); implement revised curricula and new "Green Skills" labs; and host inaugural sustainability conferences (open to industry/NGOs).
- **Years 3–4 (2025-2026)**: Scale successful pilots, refine programs based on monitoring data, and secure follow-up funding ("bridge" into 2028). Launch an annual public report on Alliance impacts (e.g. CO_2 savings, SDG contributions).
- **Year 5 (2027)**: Final evaluation against KPIs and a refreshed strategy for 2028–2030.

A detailed Gantt chart (Annual Work Plans) assigns tasks and deadlines (e.g. Campus Plan by Q2 2024, policy consultations each semester, etc.), aligning with WP6 deliverables. Progress is reviewed by WP6 coordinators each semester to adjust timelines and budgets as needed.

4.1.3 Monitoring, Evaluation and KPIs

Impact is measured through **quantitative and qualitative indicators**, benchmarked to EU frameworks. The Alliance adopts **Horizon Europe's Key Impact Pathways** and **UN SDG indicators** for evaluation.

To ensure accountability and continuous improvement, we adopt established benchmarks:

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- **UN SDG Framework**: All major initiatives are tied to specific SDG targets. For instance, campus greening efforts map to SDG7 (affordable clean energy) and SDG13; innovation projects to SDG9 (industry, innovation); and community outreach to SDG11 (sustainable cities) and SDG17 (partnerships). The consortium uses the UN Global SDG Indicators for education, energy, and environment, where applicable. Each project proposal and report must specify its SDG alignment and how it measures it (e.g. reduced CO_2 per student aligns with SDG13.2).
- **Horizon Europe Metrics**: The consortium aligns with the Horizon "Key Impact Pathways" model. For example, our objective of "innovation-led growth" is tracked via patents, spin-offs and business collaborations; "jobs and skills" via new green qualifications and employment rates; "investment levered" via private co-funding in projects. The Alliance's Research Office tabulates these indicators annually.
- **Internal KPI Dashboard**: A public KPI dashboard (updated yearly) reports on metrics such as: campus energy use (kWh/year), percent renewables, number of green courses, entrepreneurship outcomes, diversity ratios, etc. The dashboard design follows best practice (e.g. Stanford's sustainability report metrics). We will benchmark against peer alliances (e.g. EU Green Alliance's progress reports).

For each initiative, specific KPIs are defined, such as:

- **Campus Sustainability**: % of reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and energy/water usage (per capita) year-on-year, area (ha) of campus reforested or greening, % of waste recycled, number of low-emission vehicles procured. These align with SDG13 (Climate Action) and SDG15 (Life on Land).

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- **Education and Skills**: Number of "green" courses/modules added, and the proportion of graduates in sustainability-related fields (SDG4). Yearly "Green Skills Survey" of alumni measures employability alignment. Student participation rates in sustainability training (e.g. tens of workshops, mentorship labs).

- **Research and Innovation**: Publications and patents in sustainable agri/biotech, funded R&I projects (EU and bilateral), and a number of industry–academic research agreements. There will be tracking on how many projects explicitly contribute to SDGs (using indicators like those in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings: e.g. research citations in SDG2/SDG12 contexts, community outreach activities). Key metrics include the number of **startup enterprises** created via SURES, volume of private co-investment leveraged (Horizon clusters emphasise "matched" funding).

- **Partnerships and Community**: Count of active partnerships with NGOs, businesses and municipalities, and joint initiatives launched (e.g. co-funded rural development projects). Metrics from SDG17 (Partnerships for the Goals) apply here. Surveys of stakeholder satisfaction and qualitative case studies will gauge the quality of engagement.

- **Governance and EDIB**: Gender balance percentages (e.g. % of women professors and leaders), diversity of student bodies (international, rural vs urban), and progress on approved Gender Equality Plans (GEPs).

- **SDG Impact**: For each SDG target relevant to our scope, the Alliance maps outputs (e.g. quantity of sustainable food produced as a proxy for SDG2, carbon avoided for SDG13, etc.) using the UN SDG indicator database.

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To turn the strategic objectives into actions, the WP6 team, in collaboration with the WP5 and WP4 teams, provides a **Sustainability Checklist** and a Handbook (see Annex 1) containing criteria that, as far as possible, should be met by the organising teams of the UNIgreen meetings, education, scientific, or promotional events. It comprises 4 areas, such as: inclusive representation, equal access, inclusive temporality, inclusive nutrition, sustainability and accommodation.

- Inclusive representation
  - For panel composition ensure to have an equilibrium by 1) gender, 2) ethnicity, 3) age, 4) others diversity. Explain when do not apply.
  - When communicating events, be sure to use inclusive language and visuals.

- Equal access
  - Provide child care services to be inclusive for parents.
  - Be sensitive to countries' holidays, religious and civil celebration days.
  - Ensure accessibility to the structure (in terms of different types of disabilities) (make sure to be aware of any participants' impairment).

- Inclusive temporality
  - Organise events that respect the work-life balance of the timing.
  - Provide an alert for events at least 2 months in advance.
  - Provide a provisional programme at least 20 days in advance.
  - Provide an agenda at least 10 days in advance.

- Inclusive nutrition

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- Availability of sustainable beverages (water fountains, reusable water bottles, locally produced beverages, certification - encouraging the use of glass bottles, if possible, have strategic points with water dispensers so that people can fill their bottles).
- Availability of sustainable food (locally produced, organic, seasonal) certification - coffee breaks and lunches should offer healthier and more sustainable products. Include regional products, seasonal fruit, and products produced by local producers.
- Availability of vegetarian and vegan options (in addition to vegetarian options, lunches and coffee breaks should offer options that satisfy all participants, so that each person can choose what they want to eat without excluding anyone). Information about allergens must be available to all participants.
- Commitment of the organiser to donate the leftover food to the food bank or to relevant charities, students in need.

- Sustainable mobility and accommodation

  - If possible, recommending certified green accommodation, like green key or national label certified hotels.
  - Enable the events to be held in locations with routes and accessible facilities for all.
  - Whenever possible, choose event locations that have good natural lighting.
  - Whenever possible, choose buildings that use energy produced from renewable energy sources for events.
  - Ensure thermal comfort of participants and if possible from sustainable energy services (geothermal, solar panel, certification ...).

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- Inform participants about sustainable modes of transport to travel during their stay and to reach the event (other than plane) - encourage and track the way participants actually travel to our events and offer, for example, small rewards/recognition for green travel.
- Suggest using public transport to get to the event in order to minimise the environmental impact of travel.
- Provide information on the options available for getting to the event (e.g. train, bus).
- Encourage carpooling with other participants who live in the same area or along the itinerary.
- Recommend that participants choose accommodation closer to the event to reduce carbon emissions from travel. Provide a list of suggested accommodations.
- Availability of green areas during the breaks.
- Digitalisation of the event (low need to print materials, possibility to attend online - providing event information on screens and/or billboards that may already exist at the locations where the events take place.
- Use recycled and/or certified paper for printed documents, and provide QR codes for access to information that will be needed during events (e.g. the programme).
- Use sustainable goodies during the event (no goodie bags for all, inform ahead that goodies will be available in a limited amount for those who may actually need a bag, notebook or pen, but not for all). Recommend that each participant bring a pen and a notepad to the events.

Data is collected annually via the UNIgreen Reporting System. An external evaluator (or WP6 team) reviews progress biannually and adjusts KPIs or

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initiatives. For transparency, Alliance dashboards (online) display key indicators, fostering accountability and inter-university learning.

Key Performance Indicators

Key performance indicator	Unit (N, %)	Calculation formula (if applicable)	Target value for the Alliance (by 2026)
% of reduction in campus GHG emissions (Scope 1–3) year-on-year.	%	((Direct footprint value year N-1 - Direct footprint value year N) / Direct footprint value year N-1) x 100	3% reduction per year
Number of tree planting projects	N	---	≥25
Number of EU-funded green projects (with private co-investment leverage) (Erasmus+/ Horizon) proposals submitted	N	---	20
Number of joint university-industry R&D contracts signed per year.	N	---	20
Number of innovative green startups launched (via SURES) and cumulative jobs created.	N	---	8
Number of "green" courses/ modules added	N	---	25
Student engagement metrics: e.g. % of students in at least one sustainability course	%	(Number of students in sustainability courses/Total number of students at the institution) x 100	50%
Number of service-learning projects with communities.	N	---	8

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Key performance indicator	Unit (N, %)	Calculation formula (if applicable)	Target value for the Alliance (by 2026)
% of women in leadership roles in projects	%	Number of women in leadership roles in projects/ Total number of projects at the institution)	≥25%
% of international students or participants from underrepresented groups (tracked in all major activities).	%	Number of international students or participants from underrepresented groups participated in activities/ Total number of international students or participants from underrepresented groups	5%
Stakeholder satisfaction (via annual surveys) on collaboration quality.	%	Number of inquiries that are satisficed	≥70% of satisfaction

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Monitoring the Implementation of the Unigreen Green Transition Strategy

Activity	2023	2024	2025	2026
Establishing a **Green Transition Unit**				
Performing Green Transition Survey - Analyse its results, screen the UNIgreen landscape in green policy measures for green transition, which partners' considers applying. - Conclude on the existing green promotion, information, knowledge and innovation transfer, and education.				
Design and adopt a Roadmap for Green Transition - Suggest the general directions, steps and actions the partners should follow to achieve efficient transition.				
Dissemination & diffusion of innovative green solutions & concepts - Adopt a plan for networking between Alliance innovation fields with Green Transition implications to identify and adopt to in-demand career skills i.e. technical/hard skills and soft skills, and transversal competencies, address digital competencies (while also valorising DigComp), and entrepreneurial skills (linked to EntreComp), personal and social competencies (building on LifeComp. - Use the Curricula Re-thinking Forward-Looking Skills results and recommendations				
Promote digital tools and virtual forms of learning, working and mobility **Monitoring and reporting the use of:**				

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- Remote working incl. teleworking or condensed working, teleconferencing and online tools; - **Digitalisation of administrative procedures**: use of digital means (e.g. USB drives) to share key documents (e.g. manuals for mobility beneficiaries in WP4) & opt for online and digital-based enrolments (e.g. placement tests in WP5), surveys and questionnaires (e.g. in WP6, WP2, WP3, etc.)				
Promote the greening of the HEI campuses – e.g. via the Ecological Footprint Programme - **Recycling** and **waste management** - preventing or minimising the production of waste and harmful substances, reducing the use of single-use consumables, lowering the prices for waste services by promoting an adequate waste segregation through increased presence of bins; - **Green vegetation management** –planting and maintaining green vegetation (trees) on the campuses; - **Energy and water management** - use renewable energy sources; lower consumption in all campuses' premises, increase awareness on water consumption, searching for new solutions for water reuse & increase use of recycled water (such as rainwater for toilet flushing or plan watering). - preserve the nature and maintenance of the **campuses' biodiversity**, through e.g. the **creation of green spaces suitable for biodiversity conservation**. - **Reduce harmful CO2 emissions**, - **Energy efficient heating and cooling systems** in buildings. - **Stimulate increased consumption of sustainable food** with lower environmental impact, such as locally sourced products and offering dietary alternatives with lower environmental impact.				

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Promoting awareness of sustainability issues arising from the Green Deal & the UN SDGs, aimed at making the institutions more attractive - Apply to calls by national and EU programs addressing green & innovative educational technologies (e.g. internal and external project proposals submitted) - PR campaign of each partner KTO activities. Review the existing quality, relevance, & diversity of the available offers (green actions, programs & initiatives) - Present a Catalogue of UNIgreen innovative educational green technologies used at the UNIgreen university to expert groups				

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4.2 Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

UNIgreen's success hinges on multi-actor collaboration. The strategy embeds **businesses, NGOs, and communities** at every level:

- **Industry Collaboration**: The **Joint Research Centre (JRC)** provides "scientific and technical support to businesses and stakeholders in sustainable agriculture and life sciences". For example, regional agribusiness partners will co-fund R&D projects (e.g. agrivoltaic trials or bio-based fertilisers, soil health in vineyards) through joint calls. The **Knowledge Triangle Programme** is an innovation bridge: it "mobilises students, professors, researchers, business and industry stakeholders in thematic clusters and collaborative projects" to co-create solutions for local/regional challenges. This might include an agri-tech hackathon in Portugal (e.g. involving Polytechnic University of Coimbra and local farmers), or a joint crop biodiversity project with Bulgarian seed companies (e.g. with the AUP). The JRC's eight research units will offer open lab days and feasibility studies to local SMEs, translating academic R&D into market products.

- **Startup and Entrepreneurship**: Through the **SURES (Start-Ups for Research) Programme**, each JRC unit hosts an incubator that backs student/researcher startups in green agri-tech. Seed funding and mentorship (via the International & Project Office) will come from Horizon/Erasmus funds, and collaborations with entrepreneurial NGOs (e.g. founding partnerships with agrifood incubators like Anecoop's tech center). Start-up success are be monitored (number of companies launched, jobs created).

- **Educational Initiatives**: Partners in each country co-design courses and mobility programs. For instance, UNIMORE and UAL might co-teach a

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blended module on Mediterranean agroecology, with farmers' associations providing field case studies. WP3's teaching units (see WP3 strategy) feed into the curriculum updates. **Mentoring Labs,** where local entrepreneurs coach students (inspired by the SGGW's industry-engaged projects) will be established. Student exchange programs (ERASMUS, BIPs) includes placements in green NGOs or companies – e.g. Polish students doing internships at Belgian biotech firms, or Spanish students at Icelandic farms implementing precision agriculture.

- **Community and NGOs**: Local NGOs and community groups will co-own projects. For example, HEPL's **"Ecoteams"** in Liège show campus-community synergy: teams composed of students and academic enthusiasts run sustainability actions on mobility, waste sorting and biodiversity while raising SDG awareness. UNIgreen will replicate this model: each partner will form student-inclusive green clubs to engage staff/locals in projects (community gardens, river cleanups, awareness campaigns). There will be NGOs like WWF, Slow Food, or local farmer federations invited onto Advisory Boards and co-host events (aligned with SDG17). Consultation forums (annual or quarterly) will gather feedback from municipal authorities, farmers' unions and consumers on Alliance initiatives, ensuring "bottom-up" integration of needs.

- **Technology Transfer and Knowledge Sharing**: Knowledge Transfer Offices (KTOs) at each university will convene multi-actor workshops and "Green Tech Transfer Days" to match research with the market. The Strategy mandates an annual **UNIgreen Green Innovation Expo** (rotating host), showcasing projects to investors and the public. We will also develop open-access online platforms (building on HEPL's LUCK platform) to share best practices and learning materials among partners and stakeholders.

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Each of these activities will be funded and staffed through the aforementioned resource plan, and explicitly tracked in project KPIs (e.g. number of partner co-funded projects, internships, community events).

4.3 Gender Equality and EDIB (Inclusivity)

The strategy explicitly embeds **equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB)** across all activities. In line with EU policy, every partner has a formal Gender Equality Plan (GEP) – now an eligibility criterion for Horizon Europe and Erasmus+ participation. Each GEP sets targets (e.g. 50% of female staff participation in decision-making, as targeted by Horizon) and allocate resources (staff or time for Gender Officers). The UNIgreen Diversity & Inclusion Unit will coordinate Alliance-wide EDIB initiatives.

Concrete measures include: recruiting diverse teams for projects; offering multicultural communication training (Multiculturalism Programme); ensuring all events and materials (online and on-campus) are accessible to people with disabilities (Captioning, ramps, etc.); and providing language support to foreign students. The **Buddy Programme** and Student Ambassadors will specifically aid the social inclusion of international students. Moreover, as part of monitoring, we will track EDIB KPIs (gender balance, participant diversity) and publish them.

All calls for proposals (internal or EU) will require an "inclusion statement" explaining how the topic and team address EDIB. For example, a green agriculture project should consider women farmers and smallholders, not just agribusinesses. This follows Horizon's practice of integrating the "gender dimension" in R&I content. Training on unconscious bias and inclusive leadership will be provided to staff.

In sum, by 2026, UNIgreen's Alliance governance ensures **inclusive engagement** at all levels. By building on existing commitments and allocating budget to EDIB, the Green Strategy makes equity integral, not optional.

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4.4 Addressing SWOT Challenges

The SWOT analysis (see the original Strategy version) highlighted several **weaknesses and threats** and paired each with concrete strategic countermeasures:

- **Weakness: Limited Funding & Bureaucracy.** Stakeholders noted "lack of funding for greening incentives" and "time-consuming tech transfer procedures". The WP6 will establish a dedicated **Green Investment Task Force** to identify national grants (e.g. Recovery/Resilience Funds, rural development subsidies) and expedite applications. A unified financial-reporting framework (using Horizon lump-sums where possible) will cut admin costs. The consortium will create standardised IP and contract templates (with legal experts) to speed KTO processes, and train staff on them.
- **Weakness: Awareness and Skills Gaps.** The SWOT revealed "scarce promotion of green projects" and "not all teachers see practical benefits of green tech". To overcome this, we will run campus-wide awareness campaigns ("Green Uni Weeks") and faculty development workshops. The **Curricula Rethinking** action (see Section 2.3) will ensure updated programs in all faculties, in line with green labour market demands. For example, Bulgaria will establish a Center for Green Education Technologies (building on national initiatives), while Italy will integrate local SMEs into course projects. There will be a reward for interdisciplinary teaching proposals with mini-grants (encouraging professors to pilot sustainability modules). A "Green Champions" network among students, lecturers and local leaders will spread innovation through peer influence.
- **Weakness: Weak Industry Links.** Several partners reported "negative stereotypes in public–private relations" and too few grant incentives for industry collaboration. The strategy addresses this by forming **Public–**

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Private Working Groups in each country (including business associations, SME clusters, and universities) to jointly define R&I agendas and simplify cooperation. Targeted calls will be launched, co-financed by local chambers of commerce and WP6 (e.g. a Polish-Italian food innovation call). Successes will be publicised to shift perceptions (e.g. highlighting joint projects in press releases). TTOs will include business liaison officers to proactively seek partnerships.

- **Threat: Brain Drain & Talent Gaps.** "Demographic decline" and "talented workforce shortage" were flagged. In response, UNIgreen will promote rural/remote collaboration models (e.g. tele-internships with farms). **International Cooperation Programme** and enhanced mobility will attract foreign talent to partner regions. Career pipelines for students in local green sectors (e.g. guaranteed job fairs with partner agribusinesses and NGOs) will be created. Youth entrepreneurship contests (with seed prizes from the Alliance) will incentivise graduates to stay and innovate locally.
- **Threat: Competition and Bureaucracy.** Competition for funding and rigid national rules were identified (e.g. Portugal's "financial constraints"). UNIgreen will mitigate this by sharing calls and consortium-building: forming pre-alliances for Horizon consortia or Erasmus mobility consortia. The consortium will also maintain a **Regulatory Watch** to quickly inform partners of relevant national policy changes (e.g. new R&I co-financing schemes).

By systematically matching each SWOT weakness/threat with targeted actions (as summarised above), the strategy turns risks into opportunities. Many solutions leverage the Alliance's joint structure – for example, pooling legal and PR resources across countries to overcome small-size limitations.

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Reflecting the above weaknesses and threats, the following Action Points are identified:

Gaps/weak points/ comments	Action Points	Timeline
Green Strategy has a horizontal impact on all UNIgreen WPs, and the WPs should reflect it in their activities	- Make a review of the joint MSc/PhD programmes towards greening	End of 2026
Green Strategy is a role model for other projects and should be promoted in more attractive and visible format	- Publish the popular article on the Green Transition Survey - Review the implementation of the Green Transition Roadmap and publish a Summary	Mid-2026 Mid-2026
Raise the level of implementation and the outreach of the Green Strategy outside the Alliance	- Promote the types of digital or other green tools used in education e.g. press- and web-articles - Engage better the UNIgreen Associated partners (see the Grant Agreement)	Mid-2026 End of 2026
Impacts should be measurable – focus on feedback from students, but also teachers, admin, business stakeholders	- Focused interviews with students and/or teachers/ or green business - Solid surveys after each webinar, BIPs	End of 2026
The "Green Impact" should be attractively reported, e.g. not only through visual Deliverables, but also public events	- Require timely reporting of the events to the WP6 chair – pictures, videos, etc.	Mid-2026
Promote good examples/cases to showcase quality changes in addition to quantitatively reporting the KPIs	- Discuss the tools/channels with the WP9 – e.g. make footage of visiting green companies or guest-lecturers from business	Mid-2026
Unequal input/participation from all WP members in the tasks' execution	- Introduce instruments for shared responsibilities	Mid-2026

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Inefficient synergy with other WPs	- Organise bi-monthly meeting with connected WPs e.g. WP2/WP3/WP9 for better planning/cooperation - Organise joint events, exchange documents, etc.	Till the end of 2026
Increase communication and dissemination of the good practices (e.g. greening of education curricula, etc.)	- For instance, publish the Curricula Re-thinking Forward-Looking Skills results and recommendations	Mid-2026
More visibility of the achievements, timely promotion on the UNIgreen website, as well as on the 8 partners' websites	- Interactive Website Map of the CO2 and ecological footprint - Tree planting events - Green aspects of BIPs - Green business companies	Mid-2026 End of 2026
Clarify and explain the methodology of surveys, be careful with the GDPR	- Set up a minimum number of survey responders per partner, e.g. students, teachers, etc.	Mid-2026
Make a List of questions (a Questionnaire) to the PO asking about the unclear requirements/ recommendations	- Send the Questionnaire to the PO	Mid-2026

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5. Conclusions

This revised Green Strategy transforms UNIgreen's aspirations into an actionable roadmap. It anchors every goal in specific mechanisms – from funding channels to project management – with clear timelines and evaluation. By illustrating stakeholder involvement (e.g. HEPL's Ecoteams, the JRC business support, SURES incubators) and by aligning solutions to each SWOT-identified challenge, the strategy is both aspirational and grounded. Continuous monitoring (SDG/Horizon metrics and our KPIs) will guide iterative improvement. Most importantly, gender equality and inclusivity are woven throughout, ensuring "Green" is also fair and open. The UNIgreen Alliance's institutions and partners are now equipped to implement this flagship strategy, driving tangible progress toward the European Green Deal and a sustainable future.

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Annex 1

Checklist - for Organisation of UNIGREEN Meeting and Scientific Events						
Objectives to be achieved	Recommendations for 100% of achievement	0% - 0 points	25% - 1 point	50% - 2 points	75% - 3 points	Not applicable (explain)
Inclusive representation: For panels composition ensure to have an equilibrium by 1)gender, 2), ethnicity, 3) age, 4) others diversity. Explain when do not apply.	The organising team ensures a balanced representation in panels & keynote slots in terms of gender, ethnicity, age & other relevant diversity dimensions, & documents the efforts made & reasons when full balance cannot be reached					
Inclusive representation : When communicating events, be sure to use inclusive language and visuals.	All communication materials (website, programme, emails, visuals, social media) systematically use inclusive language and imagery that reflect diverse genders, ethnicities, ages and abilities					
Equal access : Provide child care services to be inclusive for parents	The event either provides on-site childcare or offers clear information and financial or logistical support options for childcare, and communicates this to all participants well in advance of registration deadlines.					

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Equal access: Be sensitive to countries' holidays, religious and civil celebration days	The event dates are checked against major national, religious and academic calendars of participating countries, and scheduled to avoid key holidays.					
Equal access: Information and communication accessibility: Ensure that all printed and digital materials are accessible and inclusive (considering typography, colour contrast, clear language, and alternative formats compatible with assistive technologies)	All printed and digital materials follow accessibility guidelines (readable typography, sufficient colour contrast, clear and simple language) and are available, on request or by default, in alternative formats compatible with assistive technologies.					
Equal access: Ensure accessibility to the structure (in terms of different types of disabilities) (make sure to be aware of any participants' impairment)	The venue offers step-free access, accessible toilets, clear signage, and, where relevant, hearing support and quiet spaces; participants' access needs are collected during registration, and reasonable accommodations are implemented and confirmed with them before the event.					
Inclusive temporality: Organise events that respect the work-life balance of the timing	The schedule is designed within family-friendly hours, avoids very early, late or excessively long sessions, and includes regular breaks to support participants' well-being					
Inclusive temporality: Provide alert for events at least 2 months in advance	A save-the-date and key practical information are circulated at least 2 months before the event, allowing participants to organise					

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	sustainable travel, care arrangements and any necessary accommodations.					
Inclusive temporality: Provide a provisional programme at least 20 days in advance	A provisional programme is shared at least 20 days in advance so participants can plan their travel, workload and personal responsibilities.					
Inclusive temporality: Provide an agenda at least 10 days in advance	A detailed agenda at least 10 days in advance so participants can plan their travel, workload and personal responsibilities.					
Inclusive nutrition: Take care of intolerance and allergies while sending a form for participants	The registration form systematically collects allergies, intolerances, dietary requirements and religious or cultural food practices, and catering is organised so that each participant has at least one clearly labelled safe, healthy and sustainable option.					
Availability of sustainable beverages (water fountains, reusable water bottles, locally produced beverages...)	The use of paper or plastic cups should be banned, and the use of glass/ceramic option, or private water bottles, shoud be encouraged. Water fountains should be available in strategic points to allow refills.					
Availability of sustainable food principles (locally produced, organic, seasonal, certification...)	For lunch the "default" option should be vegetarian. Coffee breaks and lunches should offer healthy and sustainable products. Include regional/local/seasonal products. All other allergies and dietary restrictions should be addressed, and the offer should be able to satisfy anyone.					

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	Information on allergens should be available to all when food or beverages are provided. The organiser should commit to donating the leftover food to the food bank or to relevant charities, students.					
Ensure the comfort of participants on site, and if possible, from sustainable energy services (geothermal, solar panel, certification...)	Whenever possible, choose event locations that have good natural lighting. Whenever possible, choose buildings that use energy produced from renewable energy sources for events. Availability of green areas during the breaks					
Availibility of sustainable transportation modes during the event (buses, trams, metros, walking distance...)	Suggest using public transport to get to the event in order to minimise the environmental impact of travel. Provide information on the options available for getting to the event (e.g. train, bus). Encourage carpooling with other participants who live in the same area or along the itinerary. Recommend that participants choose accommodation closer to the event to reduce carbon emissions from travel. Encourage and track the way participants actually travel to our events and offer, for example, small rewards/recognition for green travel.					

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Digitalisation of the event (low need to print materials, possibility to attend online...)	Provide event information on screens and/or billboards that may already exist at the locations where the events take place. Use recycled and/or certified paper for printed documents - This should be reflected in the goodies bags - Recommend that every participant bring a pen and a notepad for their events. Provide QR codes for access to information that will be needed during events (e.g. the programme).					
Provide adequate waste management	Availability of adequate waste disposal systems (with sorting solutions: plastics, papers, organic ...) Reduction of waste production during the event					
Use sustainable goodies during the event	No goodie bags for all, inform ahead that goodies will be available in a limited amount for those who may actually need a bag, notebook or pen, but not for all. Recommend that each participant bring a pen and a notepad to the events. Provide QR codes for access to information that will be needed during events (e.g. the programme).					
Availability of sustainable means of accommodation during the stay	Provide a list of suggested accommodations. If possible, recommend certified green accommodation, like green key or national label					

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	certified hotels... Recommend that participants choose accommodation closer to the event to reduce carbon emissions from travel.					
TOTAL						

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WP5/WP6 Checklist User Handbook

Guidelines for the Organisation of UNIgreen Meetings and Scientific Events

1. Introduction

The Checklist has been developed to ensure that all UNIgreen education offers, meetings and scientific events are organised in alignment with the Alliance's core values: inclusion, equality, sustainability, and accessibility. It promotes a shared culture of respect for diversity, equal participation, and environmental responsibility across all UNIgreen institutions.

This tool supports event organisers in assessing their compliance with UNIgreen's standards for responsible and inclusive event management.

2. Scope of Application

The checklist applies to all meetings, workshops, conferences, and scientific events organised within the UNIgreen Alliance, whether online, hybrid, or in person.

It is intended for:

- Event organisers and coordinators.
- Work Package leaders responsible for event planning.
- Administrative and communication teams supporting events.

3. Structure of the Checklist

The checklist is organised into:

3.1 Objectives to be Achieved

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Each row corresponds to a specific objective related to:

- Inclusion, equality, accessibility (e.g. balanced representation, inclusive communication, accessibility for caregivers, sensitivity to cultural differences).
- Sustainability issues (digitalisation, catering, comfort, mobility, waste management, accommodations, goodies policy…).

3.2 Recommendations for 100% Achievement

For each objective, a reference description explains what full implementation (100%) looks like. This section should be read carefully before scoring.

3.3 Scoring Columns

Users can assess the level of implementation using the following scale:

- 0% – 0 points: No measures implemented
- 25% – 1 point: Very limited or ad hoc measures
- 50% – 2 points: Partial implementation
- 75% – 3 points: Almost complete implementation
- 100% – full achievement: Described in the recommendation text

A "Not applicable (explain)" column is available when an objective genuinely does not apply to a specific event.

4. Key Principles Behind the Checklist

The checklist is organised around five main pillars:

4.1 Inclusive Representation

Ensure balanced representation in panels and teams regarding gender, ethnicity, age, and other dimensions of diversity.

Use inclusive language and visuals in all communication materials.

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4.2 Equal Access

Guarantee that all participants can attend under equitable conditions, including:

- Accessibility for people with disabilities.
- Consideration of national, religious, or cultural holidays.
- Availability of childcare services where feasible.
- Accessibility and inclusivity of printed and digital materials (typography, colour contrast, etc.).

4.3 Inclusive Temporality

Plan events in a way that respects participants' work–life balance:

- Announce events at least two months in advance.
- Share a provisional programme 20 days before and a detailed agenda 10 days before.

4.4 Inclusive Nutrition

Take dietary restrictions, allergies, and cultural preferences into account.

Use registration forms to collect this information in advance.

4.5 Green Events, sustainability

Minimise the environmental footprint of events:

- Availability of sustainable beverages (water fountains, reusable water bottles, locally produced beverages, certification...)
    - The use of paper or plastic cups should be banned, and the use of glass/ceramic options, or private water bottles, should be encouraged. The presence of a concrete, HEI-wide plastic-free programme, or distribution of reusable water bottles, is optimum.
    - Water fountains should be available in strategic points to allow refills.

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- Availability of sustainable food principles (locally produced, organic, seasonal, certification...) - Sustainable food delivery and consumption at the canteen or cafeteria. For example:
    - Availability of vegetarian/vegan options; For lunches, the "default" option should be vegetarian.
    - Promotion of healthy and sustainable products, of locally produced and seasonal food, which reduces the environmental impact (km zero), for example, for coffee breaks and lunches
    - Information on allergens should be available to all when food or beverages are provided. All other allergies and dietary restrictions should be addressed, and the offer should be able to satisfy everyone.
    - The organiser should commit to donating the leftover food to the food bank or to relevant charities, students in need.
- Ensure the comfort of participants on site, and if possible, from sustainable energy services (geothermal, solar panel, certification...). For example:
    - Whenever possible, choose event locations that have good natural lighting.
    - Whenever possible, choose buildings that use energy produced from renewable energy sources for events.
    - Availability of green areas during the breaks.
- Availability of sustainable transportation modes during the event (buses, trams, metros, walking distance...).
    - Suggest using public transport to get to the event in order to minimise the environmental impact of travel.
    - Provide information on the options available for getting to the event (e.g. train, bus).
    - Encourage carpooling with other participants who live in the same area or along the itinerary.
    - Recommend that participants choose accommodation closer to the event to reduce carbon emissions from travel.
    - Encourage and track the way participants actually travel to our events and offer, for example, small rewards/recognition for green travel.

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- Digitalisation of the event (low need to print materials, possibility to attend online...).
    - Provide event information on screens and/or billboards that may already exist at the locations where the events take place.
    - No goodie bags for all, inform ahead that goodies will be available in a limited amount for those who may need a bag, notebook or pen, but not for all.
    - Use recycled and/or certified paper for printed document - This should be reflected in the goodies bags - Recommend that every participant bring a pen and a notepad for their events.
    - Provide QR codes for access to information that will be needed during events (e.g. the programme).
- Provide adequate waste management
    - Availability of adequate waste disposal systems (with sorting solutions: plastics, papers, organic ...).
    - Reduction of waste production during the event.
- Availability of sustainable means of accommodation during the stay
    - Provide a list of suggested accommodations. If possible, recommend certified green accommodation, like green key or national label certified hotels.
    - Recommend that participants choose accommodation closer to the event to reduce carbon emissions from travel.

5. How to Use the Checklist – Step by Step

Step 1: Identify the Event

Before completing the checklist, clearly define:

- Type of event (meeting, conference, workshop, etc.)
- Format (online, hybrid, on-site)
- Target audience
- Dates, location, and duration

Step 2: Review Each Objective

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Read each objective and its corresponding recommendations carefully. Consider the entire lifecycle of the event:

- Planning and decision-making
- Communication and registration
- Programme design
- Event delivery
- Follow-up and evaluation

Step 3: Assign a Score

Select the score that best reflects the actual implementation, not the intention. Use evidence when possible (e.g. programme composition, communication materials, services provided).

Step 4: Use "Not Applicable" Sparingly

Only select "Not applicable" when the objective truly cannot apply (for example, catering in the case of an online webinar). Always provide a brief justification in the explanation column.

Step 5: Calculate and Review Results

Once all objectives are assessed:

- Review areas with low scores
- Identify good practices and strengths
- Highlight priority areas for improvement

6. Reporting and Continuous Improvement

Once completed, the checklist should be submitted to the WP5, WP6 and WP8 Coordinations as part of the event report.

The collected data will be used to:

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- Monitor progress toward UNIgreen inclusion and sustainability goals.
- Identify best practices to share across partners.
- Improve future event organisation guidelines.
- Regular feedback from event organisers and participants is encouraged to enhance the effectiveness of the checklist and strengthen UNIgreen's commitment to inclusive and sustainable practices.

7. Good Practice Tips

- Integrate the checklist early in the planning phase.
- Use it as a discussion tool, not just a form to fill in.
- Combine quantitative scores with qualitative reflections.
- Share lessons learned across UNIGREEN partners.

8. Contact for Support

For questions or assistance regarding the use of the checklist, please contact first the WP5 (for diversity or inclusivity criteria) or WP6 (for sustainability criteria) members of your HEI.

Additional information can be asked to Cindy Vallée (coordinator of the WP5) (cindy.vallee@hepl.be), or Stéphane Monfils (member of WP6) (stephane.monfils@hepl.be).

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